

TOWN OF ARLINGTON



Joseph Connelly
Director of Recreation

PARK COMMISSIONERS
Leslie Mayer, Chairperson
Jen Rothenberg, Vice Chair
Shirley Canniff
Donald Vitters

Elena Bartholomew, Associate
Peter Hedlund, Associate

Recreation Department

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, October 27, 2015

Hardy Elementary School

Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 6:00 PM for its meeting at the Hardy Elementary School on Tuesday, October 27, 2015.

Members in attendance included: Shirley Canniff, Leslie Mayer, Jen Rothenberg, Don Vitters and Associate Member Elena Bartholomew. Director of Recreation, Joseph Connelly was also present.

Member from the public in attendance: Jennifer Grass

Approval of Minutes of September 22, 2015

Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the minutes of September 22, 2015. Seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 4-0.

Friends of Menotomy Rocks Park – Entrance and Fencing Discussion

This matter was tabled.

Other

Mr. Connelly and Ms. Mayer reviewed the ADA funding proposal and asked everyone to please take the time to review it for discussion at the next meeting.

Ms. Mayer updated the Commission on the initial meeting of the CPA Committee, held on October 26th. Members of the Committee were provided with copies of the PRC Capital Plan and information related to the Commission's ADA self evaluation and Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Public Input Design for Magnolia Park

Those in attendance included:

Peter Hedlund
Alyson Taylor
Sharon Taylor
Jack Eby
Diane Forbert
Vinny Bozzi

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Elisabeth Carr-Jones
Jeanette Cummings
Deborah Hayes
Joann Robinson
Laura Frost
Michelle Lemp
George Wood
Dori & Ofer Mazor
Bill Doyle
Arthur Prokosch
Russell Goettel
Val Shea
Roslyn Fitzgerald
Katherine Oh Roof
Katherine Blitzblau
Lori Kennedy
Helen Payne
Molly Flueckiger
Patience Terry
Nancy Parr
Ken & Patty Paynter
Stephanie Marlil-Curiel
Jess Grass
Henry Brush

Following meeting notes were taken by Peter Hedlund of Hedlund Design:

Mr. Connelly introduced the project and purpose of the meeting: to get feedback from the public on needs and desires for the park.

Peter Hedlund of Hedlund Design Group, Alyson Taylor of Hord Coplan Macht, and Bill Doyle of Doyle Engineering introduced the design team.

At the beginning of the presentation two young children made a great presentation on their ideas for the park, along with a plan and Idea List (see attached) including:

- *Clean up hill*

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- *Introduce more nature*
- *Dog water bowl*
- *Large climbing rocks*
- *More community garden plots*
- *Big slide*
- *More climbing areas*
- *Nature Ideas:*
 - *Butterfly garden*
 - *Turn marsh area into pond*
 - *Bird feeder*
 - *Bat house*
 - *More trees*

Public feedback on the project was given in four overall categories: Playground, Basketball Court, Community Garden, and Overall Layout.

Playground:

- *More shade – trees or structures needed*
- *Kids use structures the least – they like more natural play opportunities*
- *Zip line similar to Joey's Park in Belmont is desired*
- *Don't like all of the children's toys at the park*
- *Use Cambridge Common Park as a good precedent*
- *Park should stimulate the imagination for children*
- *Need to give middle school age group kids something to do*
- *Water element would be great*
- *Basketball is hard to use now because of sand, children's toys, and one end of the court is sloping away*
- *Creating a bike circuit would be great for younger and older kids – not really anywhere except for Hardy School for kids to ride their bikes in the neighborhood – could create a larger circuit to connect to the new Alewife Brook Path*
- *Sand is not the best material – dirty and gets everywhere – but many kids do like it*
- *Standing water is an issue between basketball court and the soccer field*
- *The park has lost many big willow trees in recent years – can we plant thirsty trees to take up some of this water?*
- *Kids love the "stump" willow tree*

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- Need to extend fence along Herbert Road for safety
- "Mosquito Hill" is a good sledding spot for little kids – would like to keep this hill

Basketball:

- Basketball court is still used, even in its current condition
- Would be used more if the sand and toys were not in the way
- Consider youth-sized baskets as well as full-size baskets
- Two different surfaces could be useful – one for basketball and another for young kids and scooters, toys
- Issues include: sand, slope, and orientation into the sun
- Nearby pathways could have low-level safety lights for safety
- Court lighting not needed or desired for basketball

Community Garden:

- 26 current plots – originally 32 but have lost some to shade and wet conditions at the edges
- Poor soil conditions – too wet and too shady
- West side of the garden near the soccer field is way too wet
- Some plots are not really maintained – the Council on Aging plots are not maintained well
- Let's begin all over!
- Shed is needed
- Historically, Magnolia Field was a swamp - there is peat soil underneath the entire area
- In the past the field was loaded up with excess dirt from the Alewife T subway expansion
- At that time, houses that were attempted to be built on Fairmont Street had their foundations sink
- It was suggested by an abutter that the re-grading of Magnolia Field done 6-7 years ago caused worse flooding to the houses on Varnum Street to the north of the field
- Bald cypress trees to the west of the gardens create too much shade
- What type of garden use models can we think of? Robbins Farm has shared plots and operates more like a CSA – community supported agriculture model where people share hours and share in the garden produce
- Maintenance needed
- Defined paths would be helpful
- More water connections
- Location is important – need good sight lines from the garden to the playground are needed
- Consider a Children's Garden or Learning Garden for a portion of the overall garden

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Overall Layout:

- *Look into constructed wetland and natural play areas – there could be funding opportunities here*
- *Herbert Road is used as a cut-through for cars to Mass Ave. – can we slow traffic with a speed table at the Herbert Road and Magnolia Street intersection? TAC (Transportation Advisory Committee) would need to make the recommendation to the Town for any road work*
- *Consider low-level lighting along paths*
- *More trash and recycling containers*
- *There are issues with open trash containers from rodents, etc.*
- *Would appreciate having a public gathering space, more picnic tables and seating*
- *Create an amphitheater for informal plays and presentations?*
- *Space for summer movies –would require getting electricity to the park*
- *Water fountains needed*
- *Soccer currently uses the end of the field area for practicing – this also tends to be a wet area of the field and DPW trucks drive through here and create ruts*
- *There are safety issues at the park with nighttime drinking, etc. – could we have motion sensor lights?*

Mr. Connelly thanked everyone for their attendance and their participation and reminded everyone that they could e-mail him comments and suggestions. Mr. Connelly asked everyone to make sure they signed in to receive information about future meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm

Respectfully Submitted:
Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation

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